

Self-Employment
IN
SECRET:

CONTAINING

- I. An Enquiry into the State
of his Soul.
 - II. Thoughts upon painful Afflictions.
 - III. Memorials for Practice.
-

Left under the Hand-Writing of
that Learned and Reverend Divine,
Mr. JOHN CORBET,
Late of Chichester.

*With a Prefatory Epistle by the late
Reverend Mr. JOHN HOWE,*

L O N D O N :

Printed for the Publick Good,
in the Year M.DCC.XXXI.

USMA
1871



i
v
c
n
v
P
C

u
n
c
I
th
ly

B

T H E

P R E F A C E.

TH E *Character* of this holy servant of *Christ*, is already given by an every-way suitable * *band*, in what part it lay open to the observation of others. His more *interiour pourtraiſure*, which is contained in these papers, was (as it could only be) drawn by himself.

Why it is now expos'd to publick view, there is no need to be scrupulously careful in giving an account. It must be acknowledg'd, there is usually with the holiest men, a modest shyness

* *In his funeral sermon, by Mr. Baxter.*

iv *The Preface.*

of communicating these privacies of their own souls. Their *inner man* doth shew its own face with the more difficulty, by how much it is more beautiful, and worthy to be beheld. And so it was with this excellent Person, as his inscriptions upon these papers shew ; [*The State of my Own Soul,*] and [*Notes for my Self,*] signifying their intended use, was that of a mirror to represent himself to his own eye, not to other mens.

Yet this aversion (though great) hath not been always invincible, or such as no reasons to the contrary could over-sway. What are the *Psalms of David*, and sundry *memoirs* of holy men
in

The Preface.

▼

in scripture, that were remote from ostentation, and vain glory, but records of the most secret dispositions and motions of the *hidden man of the heart*, made publick for the instruction of their own, and succeeding ages. As also, the other published meditations, and soliloquies of some of the greatest worthies in the christian church, must be understood to have had the same pious design. Nor hath a generous benignity, in some heathens, permitted them to ingross to themselves, or envy to the world, those pleasant sensations of their own minds, which *they thought* might be some way instructive and useful to

other men. As that * renowned philosopher and emperor is an instance, who scrupled not to write, and leave behind him for this purpose, twelve books concerning his own life.

The thing cannot be culpable, if the design be innocent, which will in great part be discernable in the manner of doing it, when it is with unaffected simplicity, and without studied disguise: As we commend a picture, not so much for its being specious, as that it is like the face. So have good men, in giving accounts of themselves, not spared to put in the dissem-

* *Marcus Antoninus.*

pers,

The Preface. vii

pers, and disaffections of their spirits, that are as great blemishes and deformities, as a wart or mole on the face; which the faithful pencil must as curiously express, as the greatest decencies.

However, if this publication be praise-worthy, nothing is to be arrogated to the author; and if it be thought blameable, nothing is to be derogated. For though the work it self (which carries its sufficient praise with it) be owing intirely to him; or rather to the grace of God in him; the making it publick, is from the advice, and desire of some friends, willing to impart what was once most

private, for a publick good.

It is but the dissection of his soul, less to be regretted by friends, when he is now out of sight, and much more useful, than that of his lately pained body.

As anatomy discovers all the curious contexture of our bodily fabrick ; so here are vivid representations of *faith, love, an heavenly mind ; of humility, meekness, self-denial. entire resignedness to the will of God, in their first and continued motions ;* with whatever parts, and principles besides, compose the whole frame of the *new creature*. Here it is as if we could perceive with our eyes, how the blood in an humane body circulates through

The Preface. ix

through all the veins and arteries; how the heart beats, the spirits fly to and fro; and how each nerve, tendon, fibre, and muscle, perform their several operations. Here it may be seen, how an heart touch'd from above, works and tends thitherward; how it depresses itself in humiliation, dilates itself in love, exalts itself in praise, submits itself under chastenings; how it draws in its refreshings, and succours, as there is need.

To many, who have seen so steady, uniform, and amiable course and tenour of life; how grateful will it be to behold the secret motions of those inward

latent principles, from whence all proceeded? Though *some others*, would look no farther than the advantages in external respects that accrue by it. So though *some* content themselves to know by a clock the hour of the day, or partake the beneficial use of some rarer engine: *The more curious*, especially any that design *imitation*, and to compose *some like thing*, would be much more gratify'd, if through some pellucid inclosure, they could behold all the inward work, and observe how every wheel, spring, or movement, perform their several parts and offices towards that common use. What

The Preface. xi

What is here presented, as it may be of great usefulness to all that seriously design the christian life; so it hath a special use for such as design it not, and who think there is no such thing.

It may peculiarly serve to convince such, as are willing to think as ill as they can of the *calling*, and *office* of the *ministry*, that there are *some* that serve the *Lord* in that work, who do not study such subjects as are here exemplified, only to frame discourses of them, wherewith to entertain the people for an hour; but for their own use and practice too. That do *live* the things they *teach*; and

latent principles, from whence all proceeded? Though *some others*, would look no farther than the advantages in external respects that accrue by it. So though *some* content themselves to know by a clock the hour of the day, or partake the beneficial use of some rarer engine: *The more curious*, especially any that design *imitation*, and to compose *some like thing*, would be much more gratify'd, if through some pellucid inclosure, they could behold all the inward work, and observe how every wheel, spring, or movement, perform their several parts and offices towards that common use. What

The Preface. xi

What is here presented, as it may be of great usefulness to all that seriously design the christian life; so it hath a special use for such as design it not, and who think there is no such thing.

It may peculiarly serve to convince such, as are willing to think as ill as they can of the *calling*, and *office* of the *ministry*, that there are *some* that serve the *Lord* in that work, who do not study such subjects as are here exemplified, only to frame discourses of them, wherewith to entertain the people for an hour; but for their own use and practice too. That do *live* the things they *teach*; and

eat of the food they prepare for others: That are in good earnest, and most intent to *save themselves and those that bear them*, and do really venture their own souls upon the same bottom, upon which they would persuade their hearers to venture theirs; taking all possible care, *lest when they preach to others, they should themselves be cast away.*

The very opinion (as well as the thing itself) that we preach only for form's sake, and to keep up the custom, and believe or regard not what we ourselves say, is no small, (nor perhaps uncommon) hindrance to the success of preaching at this day.

day. It is hard to be serious in hearing, what I think, he is not serious in himself who preaches it. If I apprehend he trifles, 'tis a great temptation to me to do so too.

You may see, this worthy man consider'd the gospel, as a *gospel of salvation*; and not only *taught*, but *used* it accordingly. How solicitous was he to ground *substantially* and *strongly* his *hope of eternal life*! How warily did he feel his way, and labour to understand and know *practically* upon what terms he might safely appear before his judge!

To them who do not so, this ought to be taken for a *reprebensive* example; and
may

xiv *The Preface.*

may be very *directive* to them that do.

That it may attain its proper ends, is the serious prayer of

One desirous to promote the common salvation,

JOHN HOWE.

Mr. COR-

Mr. CORBET's
ENQUIRY
INTO THE
State of his Soul.

His Introduction.

IN order to peace of conscience and assurance of my good estate towards God, it must in reason be supposed, that I may rightly understand the marks of sincerity set down in God's word; as also the predominant inclination and motions of my own soul; and that I may be so far assured of my right understanding of the things aforesaid, as

to have no reasonable ground of doubting thereof. For I have no other ordinary way to know my sincerity in order to the said peace and assurance, but to examine it according to my best understanding by the marks thereof set down in God's word.

In this self-examination it is requisite that I use all diligence and impartiality with constancy: and that I earnestly pray for God's assistance in it, and heartily offer my self to his search, as David did, Psal. cxxxix. 23.

Wherefore if upon the most impartial and diligent search, that I can make, according to the best of my understanding, together with earnest and constant prayer to God to assist

und
r I
way
der
ffu-
ac-
nd-
set
it
lli-
with
est-
in
self
lid,
rost
ch,
ing
nd-
and
af-
sist

sist me therein, as in my
greatest concern; it doth most
rationally appear to me, that
the predominant inclination
and motions of my soul are
agreeable to the marks of sin-
cerity set down in God's
word, then my conscience do-
ing its office aright, is to judge
for me accordingly, viz. that
I am sincere. And in this
judgment I am to acquiesce,
because it is the judgment of
God's agent and minister,
which he hath set up within
me to judge under him of my
internal state, according to
his law, by which he him-
self doth and will judge me.

God hath the same aspect
upon the soul, which consci-
ence his vicergerent hath, as
it from time to time, or cr-
dinarily

4 Introduction.

dinarily judgeth not against him or without him, but under him and according to his judgment, either acquitting or condemning. To this purpose the Apostle speaketh, 1 John iii. 20, 21. If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things ; if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.

The State of my Own

S O U L,

According to the strictest
Search that I can make.

Pfal. cxxxix. 23, 24.

*Search me, O Lord, and
know my heart, try me
and know my thoughts,
and see if there be any
wicked way in me, and
lead me in the way ever-
lasting. Amen.*

The following Particulars
were set down in *Decemb.*
Jan. Feb. An. 1663.

AS far as I am able to
discern my heart and
ways, I have chosen
the Lord for my portion,
I take up my rest in *him,*
and

6 *Mr. Corbet's Enquiry*

and not in the Creature. To love, and fear, and admire, and bleſs him, and to have communion with him is my chief joy, and the eternal viſion and fruition of God is my great hope. I would not only have God hereafter, but here in this world for my chief good. He is even now better than all the world.

I come to God by Jeſus Chriſt ; and as I believe in God, I believe alſo in Chriſt, and rejoyce and glory in him ; and acknowledging my own ſinfulneſs and unworthineſs, I reſt intirely on him as the ground of my juſtification to life, and of all favour
and

into the State of his Soul. 7

and acceptance with God.

I receive Christ as my Lord, and give up my self to him. I let him into my heart by faith. I esteem him precious, and am willing to suffer the loss of all, that I may win him.

I desire to know him in the power of his death and resurrection, and am much grieved that I do so weakly experience that power, and feel it no more operative in me, in my dying to sin and the world, and in living and walking in the spirit.

I do not cease to lament the more heinous sins of my life; and cannot forbear the continual imploring of the pardon of them.

I

8 *Mr. Corbet's Enquiry*

I do not return again to them, and I resolve never so to do.

I watch and pray, and strive against all sin, but especially against those sins, to which I am more especially inclined. My conflicts are daily, and I am put hard to it ; but I do not yield up my self to any sin, nor lie down in it, yea, I do not suffer sinful cogitations to lodge in me.

I am many times much discomposed, damped in spirit, deadned in duty, distracted in my studies, and molested and hindered every way by the sin that dwelleth in me. But I resolve, that sin shall have no rest in my soul, and
that

into the State of his Soul. 9

to that I will never enjoy
ver it.

Though I cannot keep
and sin out of my heart, yet
out it doth not reign in my
ns, mortal body, nor do I
pe- yield my members to the
on- service of it.

I would fulfil all righte-
out ousness, and owe nothing
ot to any man but love. I
n, had a hundred-fold ra-
I ther suffer wrong, than do
a- wrong.

It was said of Christ,
ch that no guile was found in
in his mouth; and of the faith-
, ful company that followed
, the Lamb, that no guile
d was found in their mouth.
at And that it may be so with
e me I endeavour with my
e whole heart.

I trust

10 *Mr. Corbet's Enquiry*

I trust God with my chiefest outward concernment; even with that, about which I am most solicitous, and wherein to be satisfied is of great moment to me, for that it hath as great an influence upon my spirit, as any outward thing hath. And I do believe that God will provide for me herein, or otherwise supply the want of it.

My earnest desire of God is, that my outward condition may be so stated by his wise and gracious providence, as I may be least exposed to temptation, and best disposed and furthered unto duty.

I have an inclination to seek Self, particularly in
vain

into the State of his Soul. 11

vain applause, and that in religious services; and herein I have been highly guilty; but I shame my self for it before God, and I am willing to be satisfied in the praise, that comes from him alone; and I trust through his grace, that I can deny my self in matter of reputation to do his will.

I love the *Lord Jesus Christ*, and all his saints. The broken estate of the church, especially by intestine evils, is a great trouble to my spirit. The scandals of professors I am truly grieved at, and I would not by their weakneses seek to excuse my own faults, or an applauding of my own virtues.

B I have

12 *Mr. Corbet's Enquiry*

I have no settled bitterness and revenge against my enemies, but I love, pity and pray for them. As concerning *God's* enemies I am more provoked, but I would not be inhumane or cruel against them; for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of *God*.

I condemn none, I would not imbitter the spirit of any. I would answer all obligations of courtesy, as accounting it a righteousness. I would not insult over the weakness of any; and this is partly out of natural tenderness and moral considerations; and I find, that the goodness and kindness of *God*, the meekness

into the State of his Soul. 13

ness and gentleness of Christ, hath hereunto made impression upon me.

I find upon the review of my life past, according to the clearest judgment that I can make, that I have not gone backward, but proceeded forward, in the ways of godliness. And this increase I reckon not by sudden fits now and then happening, but by the main progress of the work in the total sum.

I have been grieved that I am no more elevated in the hope of heaven, and that I cannot attain to a longing desire to be gone hence, and to be there with *Christ*. I have laboured to raise up my heart, and have

14 *Mr. Corbet's Enquiry*

had enlargement, even when deadness and ~~fit~~tness had been upon me. I think with my self sometimes, were my evidences clear for heaven, I would exult to be gone hence this very hour; but I find not this readiness at all times.

When I have had a good enterprize in hand for God's glory and some publick benefit, I watched against vanity of mind, and vain glory in carrying it on; and I desire purely to aim at God's glory, and to be satisfied with my reward in him. And I take heed, that I forget not my mortality, when I am pursuing that design; but I would fain bring up my self to this

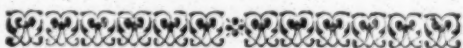
into the State of his Soul. 15

this frame, to be contented to be taken hence in the midst of it, as judging that I shall be no loser by my removal, and God cannot stand in need of that service.

Lord, forgive my inordinate self-love, which hath disturbed the actings of pure charity in divers passages of moment. For self-love in my sensitive appetite hath had motions contrary to the love of God and my neighbour. Nevertheless my judgment hath disallowed it, and I have for the most part acted against it, and for that, which the love of God and my neighbour did command.

16 *Mr. Corbet's Enquiry*

O Lord, forgive my ten thousand talents. I come to Jesus Christ, who hath made satisfaction, and lay this heavy reckoning to his account. Lord, forgive my iniquity, for it is exceeding great.



*These following Passages were
set down, March. 4. An.
1675.*

UPon the review of the foregoing evidences, after twelve years, I find through grace the same abiding in me, and more and more rooted. And some particulars which did make me more to doubt of
my

into the State of his Soul. 17

my good estate, I find to be since that time in a greater degree vanquished.

I have done what in me lies, to call to remembrance all my remarkable sins, from my childhood and youth till now: And as far as I can judge, I have repented of them both generally and particularly. And I now repent of them all, from the bottom of my heart, with a self abhorrence, if I can know my own heart by the strictest and most impartial search that I can make.

Upon the best judgment that I can make of the nature of sin, and the frame of my own heart and course of life; I know no sin ly-

18 *Mr. Corbet's Enquiry*

ing upon me, which doth not consist with habitual repentance, and with the hatred of sin, and with an unfeigned consent that God be my Saviour and Sanctifier, and with the loving of God above all.

The mercy of God towards me, in the prolonging of the day of grace; in the striving of his spirit; in his chastisements; in the checks of conscience; in the recovery of my soul out of distempers and backslidings; doth greatly affect my heart, and strongly engage me to him. This makes me often call upon my soul and all that is within me, to bless his holy name.

Though

into the State of his Soul. 19

Though my spiritual growth be very low and slow; yet to this present time, I have not grown worse, but better; speaking of growth in the whole space, or greater spaces of my time past, and not every particular day.

By prayer and endeavours long continued, I have in some measure overcome a special very sinful distemper of mind, and gained the contrary temper against a natural propensity.

Though my faith in Christ be weak, yet to have part in his promises, I am ready to part with all that is dear in this world,

20 *Mr. Corbet's Enquiry*

and I have no hope of happiness, but in Christ.

Tho' I have had doubtings touching the promised salvation, yet I know that as to my own felicity, I prize nothing more than that salvation, being the glorifying and enjoying God for ever, and I embrace it as my best good.

I love Christ, whom I have not seen, and I am affected towards him, as towards a person, who taught and did the most excellent *things*, and promised a most excellent state to his followers, and purchased their redemption at the dearest rate.

I am heartily grieved for loving God so little: Yet
I am

into the State of his Soul. 21

I am sure *this* I wrote according to a full persuasion at that time, *viz.* I love nothing more than God. In my esteem and choice, I prefer the spiritual, divine, and heavenly life, incomparably before the carnal, animal, earthly life. And this esteem and choice is made good by performance in ordinary.

I love to love God: And I desire this love not only as an evidence of my salvation, but for itself. I had much rather have a heart to love him perfectly, than to have all the riches, honours and pleasures of this world.

My conscience bears me witness that in the present

B 6 exercise

22 *Mr. Corbet's Enquiry*

exercise of my ministry, I have no self-end of worldly advantage, or reputation among men, or any interest of the carnal mind: But if the command of Christ, and the necessities of souls did not oblige me to this service, I should gladly retire to privacy and solitude.

My temporal estate is mean and low, yet I am contented with it, and humbly bless God for what I have. I live in as narrow a compass for expences, as I can, that I might have something to give to the poor, and to be helpful to those that are in need, according to my ability. And as God hath required of us to love mercy; and our
Saviour

into the State of his Soul. 23

Saviour hath said, *It is a more blessed thing to give, than to receive*; so I have more pleasure in giving a portion to the needy, as far as my mean estate will bear, than in laying out for the delight of my own sense, or worldly conveniencies. And this proceeds not from a conceit of merit in any thing that I can do, but from a love to please God, and do good.

Though I have a good knowledge about the premises, yet I am apt to waver about the conclusion. And though I apprehend the evidences of my sincerity to be clear, yet a timorousness remains in me.

Though

24 *Mr. Corbet's Enquiry*

Though I have not as yet overcome the fear of death, yet I am sure, that the unwillingness that is in me to die, is not that I might enjoy the pleasures of sense, or any gratification of the animal life.

I feel in my self a burden of sin and corruption; much sensuality, earthliness, selfishness; nevertheless I judge, there is that predominance of love to God and holiness, which I hope is unmoveably seated in my soul; whereupon I hope that it cannot be, that I should be cast out of his blisful presence into that perdition, which is a state of immutable hatred of him.

into the State of his Soul. 25

I apprehend, that the most horrid and hellish state of hell itself, lies in its everlasting and utmost enmity against God.

Thus I am searching and trying my heart and ways; and what I find by my self, I write down, that I may have it by me for my relief in an evil day, and an hour of temptation. For I must expect the time, when by weakness, or anguish of body or mind, I may be disabled to recollect my self, and duly to state the case of my own soul. And the powers of nature may so fail, that I may have but a very weak apprehension of what I have to do in this great concernment. I am

26 *Mr. Corbet's Enquiry*

I am warned by the parable of the ten virgins to look to it, that together with my lamp, I may have oil in my vessel, and be ready to enter in with the bridegroom at his coming.

Lord, be merciful to me a sinner, to me one of the chiefest of sinners. O my exceeding sinfulness! O the riches of thy goodness towards me! Should not I loath my carnal self? Should not I grieve for grieving thy spirit? I desire to do so, I hope to do so.

Do what thou wilt with me, so thou pardon, and sanctify, and save me. I am afraid of thy judgments, I can endure but little,

into the State of his Soul. 27

little, O how weak is my heart! Nevertheless I will endeavour, and I trust thro' grace, that I shall be enabled to bear thy correcting hand. Thou art wise and holy, thou art merciful and gracious, thou retainest not thine anger for ever, because thou delightest in mercy.

O spare me, and consider me, and deal with me not after my sins, and reward me not after mine iniquities; but as far as the east is from the west, so far remove my transgressions from me; comfort me, and satisfy me, for I wait for relief from thee. Whatsoever befalls me, I will put my trust in thee.

I be-

28 *Mr. Corbet's Enquiry*

I believe, O Lord, help
my unbelief. Lord, increase
my faith. O my God, I
lie at thy feet and mercy,
I put my sinful distressed
soul into the hands of *Jesus*
Christ, and I rest on the co-
venant of *grace* made in
him, as all my salvation,
and all my desire. *Amen.*



*More Observations touching
the State of my Soul.
March the 27th. 1676.*

O The wonderful mercy
of *God* towards me a
most vile and wretched sin-
ner, in convincing, rebuk-
ing, and awakening me un-
to a self-abhorrence, and
an

into the State of his Soul. 29

an utter detestation of my *sins*, my special *sins*; so that I cannot be reconciled to them.

Since the more powerful awakening of my conscience, I never have, and am persuaded never shall return to those former sins, which made a breach between *God* and my soul.

I hate every sin impartially. A sinful state is, in my internal sense, an horrid and an hellish state.

I find my self firmly resolved to give up any part of my worldly estate, that I shall be *found* to hold to another's wrong. If it be doubtful where the right lies, I am resolved first to endeavour a reference to
con-

30 *Mr. Corbet's Enquiry*

conscientious knowing men; and if that cannot be fitly had, to submit it to a legal trial, with a desire that right may take place. I know not that I hold any such estate, or that there is any doubt of my legal right to any thing that I possess; but I have made supposition for the trial of my own spirit.

When I had a father or mother, I would have trusted them, to defend or deliver me from any evil, from which it was in their power to defend or deliver me. In the same manner I now trust to my loving *wife*. Why then should I be suspicious of *God*, in whose hands I am? Why should

into the State of his Soul. 31

I doubt of his dear love and tender mercy towards me, or call in question his good *will* to preserve, or deliver me from any affliction, that would be too hard for me to bear: or to sustain, and comfort me under any suffering, which he sees fit to inflict upon me?

If when I was more careless and forgetful of God, and when I ventured upon breathes with him, he was pleased to convince me of my sin, and to rouse me up to a greater care, and to make me more earnest for pardon, and for healing, and for all needful grace, and more thoroughly resolved to follow him
through-

32 *Mr. Corbet's Enquiry*

throughout ; surely he will not refuse me in my addresses for more grace, and a more confirmed state of holiness. If I follow on to know the Lord, I shall know him, and see his salvation.

Though death and judgment be of dreadful consideration ; though God be holy and just, and I be vile, and guilty, and worthy of eternal perdition ; yet why should I doubt of mercy and forgiveness, and of support and comfort in the darkness of death, and of justification in the day of judgment, from a merciful and faithful *God*, through a powerful Redeemer and Advocate ; seeing as a humble

into the State of his Soul. 33

ble penitent believer, I lie at his feet, and cast my self into his arms, and wait on his grace, and am resolved to keep his ways, and never to return to folly.

I more desire to be sincere, than to know that I am so. The comfort and delight of being and doing good, I set not so much by, as the very being and doing good. To love God, and to be conformable to him, is that, which I most of all desire should be in me.

I will trust God in his ways. I will strive against an over-timorous solicitude about my own salvation, and will commit my self to God, who is the infinite good-

34 *Mr: Corbet's Enquiry*

goodness and love, and I will lie down and take my repose therein.

I am grieved, when I observe, or hear of the scandals of some professors; and the disorders of those, that are in charity to be judged sincere; and the follies, and frailties of the more sincere and upright. And it humbles me, by causing me to reflect upon my self, and my own faultiness, and weakness, and proneness to offend: And it makes me more to desire the heavenly society, and to be among the spirits of just men made perfect.

My sins of sensuality in every kind and degree, I search out, and repent of.

I am

I am kept by grace, from gross sins of this sort. In the gratifications of sense, which are lawful in general, I scrupulously dread excess, and undueness of circumstances. How earnestly do I desire an absolute purity!

All envy, unrighteousness, uncharitableness, uncompassionateness, undutifulness, and base selfishness, which is the root of all. I have seen, lamented, and abhorred. The motions and stirrings of mind, that way, are suppressed and dislodged: I will never give way thereunto.

Self-applauding, self-seeking, in matter of praise and honour before men, I strive against. I desire to

C

be

36 *Mr. Corbet's Enquiry*

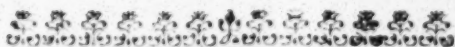
be as sincere to another's reputation, as to my own. I would not value others by their regard to me, but by their true worth. I would be contented to be little in the eyes of others. This I unfeignedly desire and endeavour, and I hope, that I have it in some good degree.

All my omissions and negligences in the work of the ministry, in preaching in personal private application, I bewail, and heartily resolve upon more diligence and faithfulness.

Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord; but remember me, and spare me according to thy great mercy in Christ Jesus.
the

into the State of his Soul. 37

the great propitiation for
sin, in whom I desire to be
found, and under the co-
vert of whose wing I stand,
that I may be saved from
thy wrath, and enjoy thy
peace, and live in thy pre-
sence, where is fulness of
joy, and pleasures for ever-
more.



Feb. 22. 16. 8-9.

GOD will never damn,
in hell, any soul that
hath the habitual predomi-
nant love of God, though
culpably remiss, and other-
wise sinful, while he re-
maineth such; yea hell and
C 2 such

38 *Mr. Corbet's Enquiry*
such love of God, are inconsistent.

I love the *holy will* of God with all my heart, and hate all disconformity to it. Nothing is more grievous to me, than to displease God; and nothing is more pleasant to me, than to please him.

I strive after christian perfection.

I labour to be unbottomed of self, to die to self-advancement, to self-gloration, and to all selfish joys, and to live wholly in, and to God, and to have self swallowed up in the love of him.

I labour in the work of self-resignation, that my will may be confined to
an

into the State of his Soul. 39

and included in the will of God.

I strive after patience in its perfect work, and do find a willingness to yield to God's will in my chastisements. I still justify God, and do not entertain an hard thought of his dealing with me; but conclude, that it is altogether holy, just and good, and for the best.

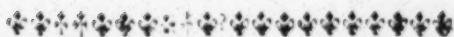
I feel my sin a greater burden to me, than my affliction. I had rather have health of soul in a body full of pain, than health and ease of body with a distempered soul.

And the sense of my great sinfulness disposeth me to

patience, under my afflict-
ing infirmities of body.

I narrowly watch my
heart, that it may not lodge
or admit a vain thought.
When I am surprized with
vanity, I suppress it as soon
as I observe it.

I am very fearful of of-
fending in a word. When
on a sudden, and by inco-
gitancy, I have spoken a
word, which upon second
thoughts is doubtful to me,
though I had not such
doubt in the speaking of it;
I have been much perplex-
ed about it, and engaged
my self to a greater watch-
fulness.



Aug. 1680.

SURELY, *Christ* hath my heart. Whensoever I swerve from *Christ* in a thought, word, or deed, it is by inadvertency and surprisal against my fixed principle; and I have great regret at it, and loath my self for it.

If I were out of all fear of damnation, I had rather be holy than unholy; and I take pains, and use God's means to be holy in opposition to the flesh, and I make it my chief care. And I do this, because I make the enjoying of God

42 *Mr. Corbet's Enquiry*

my chief good ; and rather than lose the hope thereof, I would willingly undergo the sufferings of this life, which lead to that blessed fruition, not excepting the fiery trial itself.



Aug. 1680.

I Hope, when the end cometh, my God will say to me ; Dear child, thy warfare is accomplished, thine iniquity is pardoned, enter thou into my rest. Therefore, I will both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of God. I will hope to the end. Strengthen me, O my God, that I faint not.

October

into the State of his Soul. 43

October the 4th 1682.

I Have no design, I pursue nothing contrary to God's interest: but all my designs and pursuits are for God and holiness. I think, I am sure of this, if I be sure of any thing. My great aim and care, and labour, is to cleanse my self from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God.

To whom I yield my self a servant to obey, his servant I am: But I do not yield my self a servant to sin, to obey it; but I do yield my self a servant to God, to obey him. The design and business of my life, is to do his will.

C 5

THE



THE
WORKINGS
OF MY
HEART
IN MY
AFFLICTION.

Aug. the 5th. 1680.

THE *will* of God in
laying this affliction
upon me, I unfeign-
edly approve as holy, just,
and good : And I am un-
feignedly willing to bear
the affliction, as it is an e-
vil laid upon me by his
will, till the time come, in
C 6 which

46 *The Workings of his Heart*
which he thinks fit to remove it.

I watch, and pray, and strive, that I may not give way to a repining thought against his holy hand. In this point the *spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak*. My mind doth really consent to God's dispensation, and to my submission, as being most agreeable to his wise and gracious government, and most conducing to my salvation. But my *sensitive part*, and my mind also, as it is in part unrenewed, weak, and sinful, doth greatly reluctate; so that I am put hard to it, and I must say, *I am willing, Lord, help my unwillingness*.

I have

I have not observed in the several days past, that a *thought* of direct or positive discontentment, or vexatious commotion of mind, hath been admitted by me ; nevertheless, I see to my grief, that I fall exceeding short of that quietness, contentation, and cheerfulness in my condition, and of that freeness of self-resignation to God's will, that I desire, and his goodness calls for.

I wrestle with God by importunate prayer, that this *thorn* in the flesh might depart from me ; that this distemper might be removed, or so mitigated, that I might be in some comfortable ease, and get a more cheer-

48 *The Workings of his Heart*

cheerful freedom in doing my duty. Yet I would not wrest this relief out of his hands unseasonably, and without his good will and his blessing. I would wait his time, and desire to have it with his love and favour, and with a saving benefit.

My earnest desire of deliverance is limited with submission to his holy will. Yet I find that this submission is no easy matter, but that I must take pains with my own heart; and that it is God, who must work my heart to it, and keep under the flesh, which is always ready to rebel. It is hard to be willing to bear my wearisome condition: And, O how weak is my heart,

heart, and ready to sink, if it be not upheld by a strength above my own! O let *his* grace be sufficient for me, and let his power be made perfect in my weakness.

I feel my self bettered in the inner man, by this chastening. It hath furthered mortification and self-denial, and done much to the breaking of the *heart* of pride, and to bring me on towards that more perfect self-examination, for which I labour.

It hath much deadened the world to me, and my desire to the world. It makes me know in earnest the emptiness of all creatures, and how great my
con

50 *The Workings of his Heart*
concern is in God. It drives
me close to *him*, and makes
me to fetch all my comforts
from *him*.

I see of how little value
all outward contentments
are; and not only in my
present afflicted state, but
if I were at ease and in full
prosperity. The sense of
this benefit to my soul, is
the great means of bring-
ing my *will* to that weak
degree of submission to
God's will, to which I have
attained.

O that I could live more
by *faith*, in this trying af-
fliction. I endeavour to
impress upon my soul those
arguments, which the scrip-
ture affords for patience and
long-suffering with joyful-
ness.

ness. But this will not do the work, unless the spirit of faith and patience be given from him, from whom comes down every good and perfect gift.

I pray, I cry to my Father, that he would give me the *holy* Spirit, according to his gracious promise, that I might shew forth the power of *his* grace, and that I might not dishonour *him*, nor discourage *his* children, nor reproach *religion* by my weakness. And in my bearing of it well, my reputation is nothing regarded by me, in comparison of the honour of *Christ*. Him I desire to glorify both in my obedience and patience.

I do

52 *The Workings of his Heart*

I do not love God the less, because of his correcting hand upon me. As my necessities drive me, so his love draws me, and my love brings me to *him*. I look to him as my Father: And, shall I not honour my Father, and give him reverence, when I am chast'ned of him? The *Lord* is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in *him*. I will wait for the *Lord*, who hideth his face; I will look after *him*; he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. Therefore he will turn again, and have compassion upon me.

If he kill me, I will put my trust in *him*: for *he* will
not

not cast me off for ever,
if I cleave to him with faith
unfeigned; but even thro'
death itself will *be* save me.
He will bring me forth to
the light, and I shall be-
hold *his* righteousness.

When I say, *What shall
I do, in case of such or such
troublesome or dangerous con-
sequences?* My heart an-
swers, *Be not careful, God
will provide; I will leave
it to him.*

Besides a natural desire
of ease and rest, the sense
of the temptation to which
I am liable in this conditi-
tion, makes me importu-
nate to be deliver'd from
it. I feelingly know the
weakness of my own heart,
and I am not ignorant of
the

54 *The Workings of his Heart*

the *devil's* malice and subtilty, and how he will make the fiercest assaults, where I am *weakest*. Whereupon I tremble in my self, for fear of being tempted, and shaken, and greatly amazed. And upon this ground, respecting my *soul's* safety, I judge an humble and patient importunity with *God*, for the removing and moderating of my distemper, to be my duty.

Yet to keep me from being over solicitous and anxious in this thing, I consider, that *God* doth govern and limit all our temptations, and will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able; but will, with the temptation, open

a way for us to escape.

Nevertheless, I find, that I do much offend by too great a vehemence of desire to be delivered from this grievous burden, without due submission; also by too much disquietness and dejection, when after some expectation of a benefit by that means, I perceive that my hope thereof is like to be frustrated. The *Lord* help me to carry it better, and as I ought to do, and keep my mind in its right frame.

My business under this affliction is to be careful about my own part, and to leave God's part to his care. My *part* is to do my duty, and to get the benefit

56 *The Workings of his Heart*
fit of the affliction; but
to remove it, is God's part.
Let me perform what be-
longs to me, and *what* be-
longs to God, *he* will cer-
tainly perform in his own
time and way.

The sum of my duty is
graciously to comply with
the dispensation, and to be-
have my self suitably to it,
and to please and honour
God under it. Accord-
ingly in this I labour, and in
this way I seek for comfort.
And first I justify God,
and judge my self. God
exercises his own holiness
and *justice* in this *castigation*.

His *justice* and holiness I
approve, and accept the
punishment of mine iniqui-
ty, and exercise an hatred
of

of the sin, for which I now smart.

I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, and I repent with a self-abhorrence ; and I lie in the dust at his feet, and wait on him, until that he have mercy upon me, and I am glad to receive mercy upon his terms.

I have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope that is set before me. I do most heartily take God for my portion, and I had rather live the divine life in conformity to *him*, and fellowship with *him*, here in the first fruits of the spirit, and hereafter in the fulness of glory, than live in the
fulness

58 *The Workings of his Heart*

fulness of the delights and contentments, that *belong* to the *natural* life upon earth, in a way of sin, and alienation from the life of God.

I do most heartily take Christ according to the offer of the Gospel, not only to be justified from my sins, and delivered from the wrath to come, by his merits ; but also to be sanctified by his word and Spirit, and to be governed by his laws, and to be *brought* by him unto the afore said fellowship with God. And my life and practice in the main bent, and ordinary course thereof, is according to this *choice*, in a daily walking
not

not by sight and sense, but by faith; not after the flesh, but after the spirit, in setting my heart not on earthly, but on heavenly things.

I cast off vain desires and hopes, and my expectations of good are from God, according to the tenor of his promises. When I walk in darkness, and see no light of outward comfort, human helps, and visible means, I will trust in the name of the *Lord*, and stay my self upon my *God*.

I strive with my own spirit, to subdue it to the will of *God*: And in whatsoever I am tempted to be most impatient, therein I labour most for patience. My great care is, that I may

D

not

60 *The Workings of his Heart*

not sin against my *God* in any kind ; and more especially, that I may not sin by a rebellious impatience under his correcting hand.

In this present distress I look upon my self, as being upon my trial ; and therefore I look more diligently to my behaviour in it. Now a price is put into my hand for the proof of my sincerity, and I labour accordingly to make good proof of it.

I am willing to serve *God* in pain and patience, else I were unworthy of so good a master. I am willing to be conformable to *Christ* in suffering, else I were unworthy of him. But here I must say again, *The spi-*

in his Affliction. 61

rit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak; Lord, help my unwillingness.

I am called to deny all the pleasures of sense, and to mind them no more; and I am heartily willing of it. I am called to declare to others, by the exercise of faith and patience, the righteousness of the Lord, and *his* tender mercies, and great faithfulness, and that he alone is all-sufficient. O that the power of his *grace* may be thus magnified *in* me!

This is the fruit of *afflictions*, that I look after; and in this I will labour more and more. And thro' the help of divine grace, I will not doubt of a good

62 *The Workings of his Heart*
issue, while I am found in
the way of duty. To
them, who by patient con-
tinuance in well-doing seek
for glory, and honour, and
immortality, *God*, who
cannot lye, hath promised
to give eternal life.

I am desirous to be deli-
vered from this affliction,
(if it be the will of the
Lord) upon this account,
that I might have a more
notable proof of my freer
choosing of *God* for my
portion, when I am not
thus driven to him (as now)
because I can go no where
else for comfort; also of
my freer turning from the
world, even then when
I am capable of enjoying
it. To have such a proof
of

of these things in my self, I should take for a great advantage, and be greatly thankful. Nevertheless, for the quieting of my mind, I consider that my present afflicted state doth better secure me from temptations, which might draw my heart from God to the *love* of the world; in which respect, prosperity is far more dangerous than adversity.

Moreover, my present state gives me advantage for a higher proof of the grace that is in me, and of the power of divine aid, upholding me in a life of faith and patience, by which I live upon *God* alone, when worldly comfort fails me; and by which I am enabled

64 *The Workings of his Heart*

to overcome things grievous to nature ; and to get above, not only the pleasures, but the sharp pains of sense ; and to live, and endure with little natural or bodily rest.

Also, it gives me the advantage of exercising a resolved, willing self-resignation to *God* in this dispensation, which is harsh to flesh and blood ; and a resting in hope, when there is no present appearance of help ; and a waiting and looking for the *Lord*, who hides his face ; and a cleaving to *him* by constant love, tho' he doth fore bruise me.

If I continue in the exercise of these graces, they will give me a good proof, that

that the heavenly nature is in me, and will make way for great assurance towards *God*, and full consolation in *Jesus Christ*.

And yet further ; I trust that I have, long before this distress, chosen *God* for my portion, and drawn off my heart from the flattering vanities of this world. And I know, that in this distress, I do not come to him constrainedly, or meekly as driven.

I delight to draw nigh to him, to pour out my heart before him in prayer and meditation. My meditation of him is sweet to my soul, and I do not love to be diverted from it. And when my distemper is any,

66 *The Workings of his Heart*

whit more easy, it works unto a rejoycing in him. And it is for an enlargement of heart towards *him*, that I chiefly desire bodily ease and rest.

Hear my cry, O *God* ; attend unto my prayer ! I will cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed : Lead me to the rock that is *higher* than I.

God the infinite goodness and love, will not cast off a poor soul that lies at *his* feet, and cries for the *help* of *his* grace, when it is ready to sink under the burden, and is willing to have mercy upon his terms.

Therefore, I will still cry to *him*, and look for *him*, and lean upon *him*, and will
not

in his Affliction. 67

not depart from *him* by an evil heart of unbelief. This I resolve in his strength. *Lord*, strengthen me unto the perfect work of patience.

Lord, I heartily consent that thou should'st use me as thou pleasest, so thou use me, as one of those that love thy name. Disposall is an effect of propriety, but it is always a regular and a loving disposall of the subjects of his government! O! deal favourably with thy servant. Thou knowest my frame; remember that I am but dust.

The *Lord* will perfect that which concerneth me: Thy mercy, O *Lord*, endureth for ever. Forsake not the works of thine own hands. O *Lord*, without thee I can do nothing.

68 *The Workings of &c.*

thing. Therefore, I must beg, and thou wilt give grace sufficient; without which I cannot subsist: For therein is the life of my spirit.

For ever, O *Lord*, thy word is settled in heaven.

Pity me, O *Lord*, as a father pityeth his children.

Comfort me, O *Lord*, as one whom his mother comforteth.

The *Lord* will wait, that he may be gracious unto you: For the *Lord* is a God of judgment: Blessed are all they, that wait for him.

Can I be in a *better hand*? As my professed judgment is concerning God's proceeding; so let me stand affected towards it.

NOTES

NOTES

FOR

My Self.

KEEP thy heart with
all diligence ; for out
of it are the issues of life.

Death and life are in the
power of the tongue.

Entertain not a sensual
imagination for a moment ;
and give not way to the least
glance of the eye towards va-
nity.

Be always expecting some
trouble or other, to interrupt
thy outward peace and rest.

Never expect any thing
from the world ; and when it
offers thee any thing that is

70 Notes for himself.

good for thee, receive it; but catch not at it greedily.

Be always mindful what thou may'st do for thine own and others salvation, in every instance and upon every occasion.

Die daily.

In arguing with another, watch against every inordinate heat of passion, loud speaking, and every rash word.

If any neglect or slight thee, care not for it, yet observe it.

Any matter of trial to thee, reckon among thy gains.

Take no delight of sense, but in a manifest and direct subserviency to spiritual ends; and use not that delight to irritate, but to allay sensuality.

*When a sensual imagination or passion breaks in, then
excite*

Notes for himself. 71

excite a taste of the powers of the world to come ; and delay not to recover the divine frame.

What thou doubtest, do not.

In thy actions, consider not only what is lawful, but what is best in the present circumstances ; and do that.

In every delight of sense watch against all brutishness.

When thou art in company, where the talk is but vain, watch to put in a word, that may be to edification.

If any despise thee, do not bear a grudge against him for it. And be not offended with any, meerly because they do not honour thee.

*When thou art framing excuses, take heed of speaking an untruth, or approaching
near*

72 Notes for himself.

near to it; lest in avoiding the offence of man, thou make too bold with God. Take heed of this also, when thou wouldest speak pleasingly, and avoid offence in speaking.

Use no recreation or delight of sense, but what thou canst at that very time desire of God, that it may be sanctified to spiritual ends.

When thou hearest that another hath spoken any thing to thy injury or disparagement, beware of a transport of anger, that thou speak not harshly or unadvisedly against him, or too passionately for self, or as too much concerned for self.

Uphold the reputation of thy colleague, or any that is joined with thee in service,
as

Notes for himself. 73

as thou would'st thine own.

Watch against all secret pleasure, in the lessening of another for advancing thy self.

Pray heartily for the success of thy colleague and others, who perform the same service that thou art engaged in. And rejoice in whatsoever good is done by them, as in what is done by thy self, and own it before men.

Use not animosity and contention in any matter, that may be brought to a good issue in the way of peace.

Engage not hastily as a party in a difference between others; but reserve thy self impartial and unengaged, that thou mayest moderate between them.

Whilst

74 Notes for himself.

Whilst thou lamentest thy weakness in some cases, and seekest more strength, be sure to use that greater strength in all other cases, whereunto thou hast attained; and be not remiss or forgetful in any duty, that is more facile to thee: So shalt thou have comfort in thy willing mind and honest care, and do much towards the attainment of that, which thou yet wantest, and reachest after.

In the time of prayer, let no business divert thee from it, that is not of present necessity.

When thou hast an opportunity of speaking a word for the good of another's soul, defer not the doing of it till another time.

Watch

Notes for himself. 75

Watch against all bitter and overpassionate speeches, against malignant opposers of truth. For meekness of spirit and behaviour, is more according to Christ, than wrathful zeal.

Be not transported with passion against those conformists, who are more sober than many others; yet manifest too little compassion to their suffering brethren. For even in the regenerate, there is a remainder of the spirit of envy, partiality, and selfishness, and too much of wrath, and bitterness, and other parts of the serpentine nature, though in a mortified degree. And we are to yield grains of allowance, for the temptations of prejudice, interest, &c. to which

74 Notes for himself.

Whilst thou lamentest thy weakness in some cases, and seekest more strength, be sure to use that greater strength in all other cases, whereunto thou hast attained; and be not remiss or forgetful in any duty, that is more facile to thee: So shalt thou have comfort in thy willing mind and honest care, and do much towards the attainment of that, which thou yet wantest, and reachest after.

In the time of prayer, let no business divert thee from it, that is not of present necessity.

When thou hast an opportunity of speaking a word for the good of another's soul, defer not the doing of it till another time.

Watch

Notes for himself. 75

Watch against all bitter and overpassionate speeches, against malignant opposers of truth. For meekness of spirit and behaviour, is more according to Christ, than wrathful zeal.

*Be not transported with passion against those conformists, who are more sober than many others; yet manifest too little compassion to their suffering brethren. For even in the regenerate, there is a remainder of the spirit of envy, partiality, and selfishness, and too much of wrath, and bitterness, and other parts of the serpentine nature, though in a mortified degree. And we are to yield grains of allowance, for the temptations of prejudice, interest, &c. to
which*

76 Notes for himself.

which good men, as well as others, are obnoxious.

In thy zeal against the sins of others, be mindful of thy own exceeding sinfulness: Call to remembrance thy great offences, which though they be unfeignedly repented of, give thee to understand what cause thou hast to be meek, and humble, and patient towards all men.

Watch against the motions of pride and hypocrisy, in the presence of any person, whose favour and opinion thou much esteemest. What is man that thou shouldest pass to be judged by man's judgment, or seek applause from man!

Be not discomposed about some petty absurdities of behaviour, or little indecorums, or oversights;

Notes for himself. 77

sights ; for so to be, is pusillanimity.

When thou hast conceived a dislike of any person, his ways, or actions, or dost ill resent his carriage towards thee ; take heed, thou do not take any secret pleasure in the foresight of evil coming upon him ; or in hearing or observing any such folly of his, as tends to his reproach or ruin, or notable damage.

*If thou hast fore-spoken the calamity, or any evil, that in reason is like to befall one, who doth unadvisedly manage himself, and his affairs ; take heed of wishing or willing, that the evil should come to pass, lest thy judgment or fore-sight should seem to be disparaged ; yea, take heed of
any*

78 Notes for himself.

any motion rising towards such a wish or will.

My own exceeding faultiness engages me in seeing and bearing the faults and follies of others, to pity them, rather than to rejoice or glory over them; and to cover or lessen those faults, rather than to aggravate or display them.

The mercy and forgiveness that I have found and hope for at the Lord's hand, engages and disposes me to forgive injuries and abuses done to me. And I should not think it much, that I, who am so sinful, should bear some contumelies or abuses from men.

It is displeasing to me, to bear the faults of others insisted on, whether they be matters of folly and inconsiderateness,

Notes for himself. 79

derateness, or of perverseness and malice; but especially if the matter be not evident.

I find, that petty damages and injuries are apt to be vexatious, especially in a matter the whole whereof is but little; as in a little farm or living. Wherefore, I endeavour, that I be not surprized with a troublesome appearance, and consider the moment of a thing how light it is.

Abhor every thought, word and deed, which is contrary to love, and tends to the hurt of others.

The more men wrong thee, the more watchfully maintain thy love towards them.

After thy publick ministrations in prayer and preaching,

80 Notes for himself.

ing, be not thoughtful or much concerned, how men like thy performance; but be concerned for this, how acceptable it is to God, and how effectual and successful to holy and saving means.

If God single me out for special great suffering, I have no reason to judge amiss of it: For such is the state of the things in the world to come, that some individuals must of necessity suffer for the good of the people. And, why not I, as well as another? God is my owner, and he may do with me, as with any other, even as he pleaseth; and he is my father, and he will use me well, and make me sufficient amends for all my suffering; and I shall be no loser,
but

but a
by in
In
trial
be a
hard
shall
with
Fe
will
heav
cast
balan
propo
and
allur
seriou
sever
whic
ness.

To
to th

Notes for himself. 81

but an exceeding gainer thereby in the end.

In this present state of trial, it is requisite that there be a sufficient difficulty and hardship, for all those that shall be saved, to grapple with.

For all our boasts of free-will; unless there were some heavy weights of sufferings cast by providence into the balance, to poise against our propensions to follow lusts, and pleasures, and worldly allurements, we should never seriously set our selves to the severe and self-denying duties, which belong to true godliness.

*To avoid inconveniencies to thy self, expose not any
to*

82 Notes for himself.

to danger, whose safety thou art bound to provide for.

In all accusations, whether publick or private, when thou hast made a sufficient defence, enter not into needless matters for ostentation, or such further vindication, as is not necessary, if thou stand in a slippery place; but lie at a close guard, lest thou be entangled, or in some point circumvented.

I will never wittingly and wilfully do amiss, by commission or omission, in a greater or lesser matter, because I shall too often do amiss, at least in smaller matters, thro' ignorance, or inadvertency, or surprizal of passion, do what I can.

Watch

Notes for himself. 83

Watch every opportunity to put in a savoury word, for the good of a soul, with whom thou hast occasion to converse.

Remember thou hast nothing of thine own, but all is the Lord's; and accordingly use all that thou hast to no carnal interest, but to serve him, as being wholly devoted to him.

Be as serious and hearty in thy prayers to God for the concerns of others, as for thine own.

Watch against selfishness, lest it work unto great uncharitableness.

When thou hast evidences of thy sincerity, which cannot in reason be gain-said, hold to them, and take comfort in them; yet still endea-

E

your

84 Notes for himself.

your by reviews, and further searchings, to clear it more and more.

We keep our evidences, by keeping our graces in their lively exercise.

Fetch thy comforts from heaven, and not from pleasures and hopes here below.

Do not overvalue any worth that is in thy self; but think it rather less than more, than it is indeed.

If any slight thee, be neither dejected nor provoked.

Do not value men according to their esteem of thee, but according to their true worth.

Watch against the expectation of hearing thy own praise; and when such a thought arises, instantly suppress it.

When

Notes for himself. 85

When thou art commended, let not thy thoughts dwell on it with delight; but let it be to thee as nothing.

Take heed of too great a valuation of thine own work, or usefulness in thy place; and lay not too great a stress thereon.

When friends out of love overvalue thee, it concerns thee not to overvalue thy self; nor to take more than thy due, though they give it.

Have a habit of compassion towards the afflicted, firmly fixed in thee, that the motions thereof may be suitably stirred up on every occasion.

Let an abhorrence of any content in another's sufferings, be deeply imprinted on thee;

E 2 that

86 Notes for himself.

that every thought thereof may be prevented, or instantly suppressed: Yea, hate all disregard to another's misery.

Watch against all eagerness, and immoderate delight in eating and drinking; and against minding any kind of food, for the pleasing of the sense. Come to thy meals not like a brute, but as becomes a saint. Never terminate in the sensitive pleasure, but make use of it to raise thy heart to God.

When thou hast eaten so much, so that thou thinkest more is not expedient, or is better forborn than taken, proceed not to a bit more, lest thou be entangled or disturbed.

Still consider, Is this act, I go about, agreeable to one
that

Notes for himself. 87

that hath communion with God? Will this act promote communion with God? Do I come to this act, so as to have communion with God thereby promoted?

Seek the lawful contentment of any that are about thee, as thou dost thy own; and be as glad to gratify them as thy self, so far as it is convenient for them. Hate and shun all motions of unworthy selfishness: And see, that others be sharers with thee in thy pleasant things, and be not content to have them to thy self alone.

Be not over solicitous, for humouring thy self in sensitive suavities, but rather suspicious of it, and be abstemious from it.

88 Notes for himself.

Always mind, and do the present duty. Comply with the present dispensation, and make the most of it. Thy business is to please God, and God will provide for thy comfort.

Lay thy heart to rest in the will of God. For there is no other rest for the soul, to be thought on.

I will not indent with God for any good but what is included in the covenant of grace. I will expect no good but according to the tenour of that covenant, which is all my salvation and all my desire.

I am resolved that pride shall not set me to study, or preach, or pray, or carry me on in any service. If thoughts
of

Notes for himself. 89

of men-pleasing or man's applause, steal in with my honest intentions, I will instantly cast them out, as soon as they be discovered, and I will watch and pray for the preventing of them. I will watch, when I go forth in my service for God, that pride do not send me forth: Mens opinion of me shall be nothing with me, but the pleasing of God, and the doing of good, shall be my whole scope.

*In performing prayer, I am intent upon God and his bearing, and observing my thoughts and words; and I earnestly purpose and strive against thoughts about mens observing and judging of my performance. Nevertheless, I do find that together with my
sincere*

90 Notes for himself.

sincere and earnest intention directed to God, thoughts of regard to mens esteem and judging, will too often thrust in, do what I can, so as either to be pleased or troubled, as I think they judge. These thoughts have greatly troubled my spirit.

Hereupon I consider, that a due regard to expressions for mens sake, that they be affecting and not offensive, is not faulty but necessary; and therefore must be heeded. And I think, that my thoughts about mens judging have this intention at last chiefly, that my expressions be affecting, and not offensive; yet I am jealous of the mixture of corruption and vanity.

I earnestly endeavour to have my heart so filled with the apprehension of God's infinite Majesty, and my infinite concernment in him, that all impertinent thoughts may be quite swallowed up. All designing and endeavouring to please men for my own praise, I do at that very time detest and abandon; yea, at that very time I am sure, I do very little regard either the approbation and praise, or the disallowance and dispraise of those very persons, about whom my thoughts are apt to run out, as aforesaid. I do my uttermost to prevent, restrain, and suppress all such thoughts; they are a burden to me.

*There is scarce any thing that stirs within me, which
bath*

92 Notes for himself.

bath less of my will, than these thoughts have. There is scarce any thing, against which I do more watch, and pray, and strive, than against these thoughts. And whatsoever tincture of vanity and corruption be found in them, I am heartily sorry for it, I hate and loath it; and I hope that the merciful God will not impute it to me, to the rejecting of my prayer, or to any breach between him and me.

I find that my very fear of this evil, and desire to avoid it, doth draw my thoughts to it; as a man's great desire to sleep, and his fear that he shall not sleep doth commonly keep him waking.

These

Notes for himself. 93

These thoughts I abhor, not only before and after, but in the very time they come in. And I strive with might and main against them. If God approve my service, and own me in it, I shall be abundantly satisfied; though men (whatsoever or how many soever they be) should despise and loath it. On the contrary, if men should never so highly approve, I can never be satisfied if God do not accept and bless it. This I am sure of, if I be sure of any thing.

I discern, that by care I have brought it to that pass, that my thoughts of others present with me in prayer, are not with regard to their praise; which I value not; but to what is fit to be done by me
in

94 Notes for himself.

in that service and to their being affected with it.

I find I am prone to be anxiously scrupulous ; yet I should consider that there be inevitable weaknesses (as impertinent thoughts) accompanying the best performances.

F I N I S.

US/ML

ENC 117

THE UNITED COLLEGE

VICTORIA PARK

MANCHESTER 14

